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Comparing protests and demonstrators in times of austerity: regular and occasional protesters in universalistic and particularistic mobilisations

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ABSTRACT

The recent economic crisis shaped a new wave of protest in Europe mobilising thousands of people. Austerity measures brought not only the 'usual suspects' onto the streets, they also awoke less frequent demonstrators. What brought all these people to the streets? Are their motivations the same for participation in all demonstrations? We compare participants in two types of mobilisations against austerity: those called particularistic (which are reactions to particular anti-austerity issues), and those universalistic (which address much broader issues such as questioning the political system). We also compare two typologies of participants taking into account their participation history: regular and occasional protesters. Employing a two-by-two design defined by type of demonstration (Particularistic vs. Universalistic) and the individual's participation history (Occasionals vs. Regulars), we found that the differences between demonstrations were smaller than those within types of protesters. Nevertheless, even in this period of hardship, motivation to participate in particularistic or universalistic protests differ depending on the perceptions of political system, ideological positioning and organisational embeddedness. Interaction analyses showed that different levels of identity, trust in institutions and satisfaction with democracy are crucial in driving people to participate in different types of demonstrations as occasionals or regulars.

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Introduction

The popularity of protest has grown and has become a common action in many Western societies (Meyer & Tarrow, 1998). Periods of economic and political crisis tend to influence this tendency even more. 2008 marked the beginning of a worldwide economic crisis. Governments adopted austerity measures, eroding welfare states, creating widespread indignation about the loss of rights acquired when they were constituted. This aggrieved large sectors of the population (Utzet et al., 2014).

Facing this economic and political crisis, many people decided to take to the streets to express their dissatisfaction, and to demand changes. Protests took place in many European countries, for instance Greece (Rüdig & Karyotis, 2013), Portugal (Accornero & Ramos-Pinto, 2015), Spain (Cristancho,

2015) or the U.K. (Dufresne, 2015). Some studies include all these mobilisations as part of a cycle of contention against the crisis (Della Porta, 2015) with a new materialist focus (Peterson, Wahlström, & Wennerhag, 2015). However, even accepting that these demonstrations occur in the very same period of economic and political tension and share some claims, they differ remarkably adopting two different dimensions. On one hand, there are those mobilisations conveyed by traditional unions, addressing particular issues, claiming against these austerity measures, and adopting a materialist motto which could be called particularistic (Klandermans & van Stekelenburg, 2016; Saunders & Olcese, 2014). At the same time, there are other demonstrations characterised by the occupation of public space, with different organisers, who are not only showing their anger against the austerity measures, but demonstrating much broader grievances, which are called universalistic. Examples of these grievances are changing the political system itself and criticising the representativeness of the current democracy.

Several studies refer to these two types of mobilisations (Della Porta & Mattoni, 2014; Flesher-Fominaya & Cox, 2013), but as far as we are aware, none of them have tried to compare systematically participants in both. Attending either type of demonstration is motivated by different reasons, and one of the aims of this work is to test this idea.

Beside this, we also want to know if the reasons to participate in these mobilisations are the same for all participants attending the same demonstrations, or if there are also differences among them. Recent studies have shown that at the same demonstration we can find different profiles of participants, based on their degree of past participation (Saunders, Grasso, Olcese, Rainsford, & Rootes, 2012), who have different motivations to attend the protest. This renewed activity of protest, mobilises the organised, but also organises the demobilised, attracting several demonstrators with different participation histories to the protest, some of them being regulars and others occasionals. Regulars are people with a long participatory trajectory in collective action; occasionals, however, only participate from time to time. This distinction is important because in every demonstration we can find a significant percentage of these two types of people (Rüdiger & Karyotis, 2013), and their reasons for attending the demonstration could be different also according to this different profile.

Therefore, in this study, we want to find out if being occasional or regular, as well as participating in a particularistic or universalistic demonstration is motivated by different reasons. To do so, we will focus on demonstrations that took place in Spain between 2010 and 2011, given that this country holds first place in Europe both in number of demonstrators (European Social Survey, 2012) and the number of demonstrations (Jiménez, 2011).

Type of demonstration: particularistic vs. universalistic

As Tilly (2008) pointed out, street demonstrations are contentious performances that follow scripts but leave room for variation. For this reason, all demonstrations are similar and different at the same time.

Anti-Austerity demonstrations are protests enacted by people whose material interests are threatened by the austerity measures taken by their government. Since the financial crisis started, governments have instituted unpopular austerity measures, generating what Bergstrand (2014) calls 'loss' or 'commission' based grievances. That is, grievances based on the loss of something valued by the actions of some authority.

Those anti-austerity mobilisations could be divided into two categories depending on their claims and organisers. On the one hand, there are those mobilisations addressing particular issues, making opposition against specific austerity measures taken by the national government or under demand of European Union requirements (opposing a new labour reform, protesting against specific cuts in education, health system, etc.). These mobilisations, referred to as particularistic, were organised mostly by trade unions (traditional social movement organisations), characterised by a traditional leadership in a top-down manner. Consequently, the leadership of the unions framed the issue, formulated the claims, built coalitions and assembled mobilising structures (Boekkooi, Klandermans, & van Stekelenburg, 2011). They protest against particular problems but do not question the system which they are part of.

On the other hand, there are those mobilisations against the state that take those austerity measures. They are protesting behind more fundamental claims, questioning the legitimacy of the government. These types of universalistic demonstrations are represented by Occupy/*Indignados* demonstrations, which have a different organisational structure, without obvious leaders, and without a link to traditional political parties and social movement organisations (e.g. Manilov, 2013). They are less defined than the labour unions, and open to several ideologies and social classes. As they define themselves: ‘We are ordinary people devastated by a crisis we did not cause. Our political elite has chosen to protect corporations, financial institutions and the rich at the expense of the vast majority’ (Democracia Real Ya!, 2014; our translation). Occupy/*Indignados* question not only the austerity measures, but all the establishment actors (traditional left- and right-wing parties and unions), and develop new forms of participation, such as the occupation of public squares. They are mobilised by universalistic claims and attract a much more diverse population into their protests (Klandermans & van Stekelenburg, 2016).

According to Cristancho (2015), identifying who is blamed for the political and economic crisis is a central indicator of how the crisis is perceived, and hence this blame attribution is expected to vary with differences in movement frames provided by the organisers of the particularistic or universalistic demonstrations. It is assumed that the universalistic demonstrators are—as the particularistic protesters—also aggrieved about the austerity measures. However, universalistic demonstrators also question the political system itself and not merely the measures taken by that system. These different organisers and their different aims are expected to bring different crowds to the streets, with different motivations (van Stekelenburg & Klandermans, 2014).

Participation history: regulars vs. occasionals

One of the factors that differentiate demonstrators is their participation history, in other words, the frequency with which they participate in demonstrations. Scholars examined the different biographical profiles and motivations of participants with different participation histories (Saunders et al., 2012; Walgrave & Verhulst, 2006). Based on these studies, one important conclusion can be drawn: regulars and occasionals differ significantly. Regulars participate more, and in more diverse sociopolitical organisations. They are ideologically situated on the left and they evaluate the working of the political system negatively. Hence, politics plays a far more important role in the lives of regulars than in occasionals.

Given that every regular has been occasional before, what is it that turns an occasional demonstrator into a regular one? Corrigan-Brown (2011) shows that it is political commitment in addition to social embeddedness which keeps regular activists going. Occasionals, in contrast, are only activated by specific grievances and by specific mobilisation. Veenstra and Haslam (2000) show that in situations of intergroup conflict, only those with strong ties to the group responded by indicating a greater willingness to participate in collective action. Members with strong ties’ willingness to participate in trade-union activities is reinforced by their motivation to support the group, to stand by their group, and therefore results from what Ellemers, Spears, and Doosje (1999) define as solidarity strategies. Those with weak ties showed a decrease in willingness to collective action in situations of conflict. However, when in addition to the conflict, the associated threat was also referred to, there was no bailing out. Veenstra and Haslam (2000) point out that one of the reasons is their motivation to protect their personal interests, resulting from what Ellemers and colleagues define as individualistic or opportunistic strategy (Ellemers et al., 1999).

Translated to regulars and occasionals, we expect regulars’ ties to the movement to be stronger than those of the occasionals. Consequently, regulars would strive for unity and ‘stand and fight’ as they always do, while the economic and political crises would bring the occasionals ‘back into the fold’. In fact, since the crises, young people became much more interested in politics, being outraged or distrustful about Spanish politicians (Centro Reina Sofía sobre Adolescencia y Juventud, 2015). Hence, disillusion with the economic and political situation does not mean giving up politics altogether. On the contrary, the crises politicised the occasionals. Therefore, it is expected that both regulars and occasionals want their grievances to be addressed, although regulars are expected to be extra motivated as they are also spurred by solidarity; that is to stand by their group in the conflict.

Explanations of protest participation

This study examines whether the participation history and the type of demonstration generate different reasons to participate. In what follows, explanations for protest participation are elaborated, running from attitudes towards political system, ideological positioning, organisational embeddedness and collective action frames.

Attitudes towards political system

According to Anderson and Mendes (2006) and Dalton, van Sickle, and Weldon (2009), *distrust in institutions* and *dissatisfaction with democracy* can feed protest participation. According to Newton and Norris (2000), these variables are the main indicator of citizens' basic feelings about the political system, so if the system does not respond to the demands of their people, they have to embark on alternative routes to change the state of affairs.

In the case of distrust in institutions, the study of Braun and Hutter (2014) confirms previous studies which showed that participation is more common among those citizens more distrustful (Anderson & Mendes, 2006; Dalton et al., 2009), but also reveals that the negative relationship between trust and collective action is even greater in those systems politically more open. According to Anduiza, Cristancho, and Sabucedo (2014), Occupy/Indignados movement follows protests in France and Greece and is a reaction against the inability of the system to address the economic and social problems of their citizenship. In this sense, it is expected that low levels of trust and satisfaction will move participants into universalistic demonstrations. Furthermore, recent studies have shown how participants with an activist profile are decreasing their faith in the system probably due to their disillusion with a system they have been fighting over and again (Gómez-Román & Sabucedo, 2014), so it is expected that those participants with a regular participation history will have the lowest levels of trust in institutions and satisfaction with democracy.

Ideological positioning

Political ideology has been proved to be one of the most important dimensions for political participation. In this section, several aspects of the ideological positioning are commented on.

Political orientation. The political orientation of citizens provides a general framework for understanding the context. This political orientation provides a clear speech about how to understand certain political issues and what position should be taken to these issues (Hooghe & Kern, 2013). Several studies have found that citizens with a leftist orientation are more likely to participate in protest (e.g. Dalton et al., 2009; Hutter, 2014). In the particular case of the protests against the economic and political crisis, both particularistic and universalistic demonstrations, it would be reasonable for these to be attended by participants who have a leftist position. However, those having more leftist positions will be regulars, given that they are more politically active, and therefore more politically polarised.

Party identification. Party identification directs citizens to relevant policy issues and helps them to set out their position on those issues (Hooghe & Kern, 2013). Political parties are essential linkage mechanisms between citizens and the political system. They have a strong impact on the political attitudes and behaviour of citizens (Nie, Verba, & Petrocik, 1979). As Panebianco (1988) pointed out, political parties socialise citizens into politics. They provide a mechanism for identification with the political system and they aggregate their preferences (Panebianco, 1988). Political parties also provide citizens identification with relevant policy issues and their positions on those issues (Hooghe & Kern, 2013). Recent studies on the Occupy/Indignados movement have found that their participants have no clear position in relation to parties, criticizing them for being part of the system they don't trust (Manilov, 2013; Pickerill & Krinsky, 2012). However, being critical with system parties doesn't mean weak party identification. What is happening is that they are identifying with minor or anti-system parties. Hence, the strength of party identification may be similar for attending both demonstrations in the regulars' case.

Finally, it is expected that participants differ in terms of *political values*. Individuals hold attitudes towards general moral and political principles like equality, and these core beliefs can account in part for the individual's attitudes towards the daily political issues. Heath, Evans, and Martin (1994) developed a two-dimensional model that describes the structure of political values comprising general orientations to *economic left-right*¹, on the one hand, and individual liberties or *libertarian-authoritarian* on the other. In the case of the economic welfare domain, these items tap government intervention and free enterprise, and economic and political equality. In the case of the libertarian/authoritarian domain, items tap freedom of thought and conscience, freedom of association, and freedom to pursue one's own course of life.

Labour unions fight for economic and political equality. In times of crisis, it is expected that unions mobilise people fighting for just welfare distribution. It is also expected that people with more libertarian values to be more tolerant of protest (Inglehart, 1990), demanding new relationships between citizens and authorities, and are concerned about social minorities. Consequently, we expect participants with strong economic left values to participate in particularistic protests, and those with more libertarian values to be regulars and to participate in universalistic demonstrations.

Organisational embeddedness

Embeddedness in networks increases the chance of being targeted by mobilisation efforts (Klandermans, van der Toorn, & van Stekelenburg, 2008; Schussman & Soule, 2005). Membership of social movement organisations provides such networks. Research has found repeatedly that being part of a social movement organisation is one of the strongest predictors of participation (Gould, 1990; Nepstad & Smith, 1999; Passy & Giugni, 2000; van Stekelenburg, Klandermans, & Akkerman, 2016), for this reason, those who are part of more organisations should be regulars. Demonstrations as particularistic protests, called by traditional movements, should attract participants more embedded than the universalistic protests. This could be because the latter are eschewed by new movements such as Occupy/Indignados, far from traditional political parties and social movement organisations (Anduiza et al., 2014).

Collective action frames

There is some consensus on the existence of three collective action frames, comprised of injustice, efficacy and identity (Gamson, 1992; van Stekelenburg & Klandermans, 2007; Van Zomeren, Postmes, & Spears, 2008; Vilas, Alzate, & Sabucedo, 2016).

The first corresponds to *injustice*. If people feel they are not treated the way they deserve, or they are experiencing an unfair situation, they want this to change (Gurr, 1970). Gamson (1992) stressed that the injustice frame has a cognitive component—grievances—and an emotional component—anger. Van Zomeren et al. (2008) conclude on the basis of a meta-analysis that the affective component (*anger*) is the one that stimulates participation most. If participants consider their situation to be unfair and are angry about it, the emotional component spurs them onto the streets. According to Bergstrand (2014), anti-austerity protesters experience severe 'loss grievances', as the government takes away welfare rights they have enjoyed in former decades, and Saunders et al. (2012) found regular participants to be *angrier* than any other profile of participant. This is in Tversky and Kahneman's terms (1981) due to *accessibility heuristics*. Because regulars protest more on more issues than occasionals, the injustice perception (both the cognitive and emotional component) is more accessible to their memory. Based on this, we expect that those who are angrier will be regulars participating in particularistic demonstrations.

Efficacy, the second component, implies an instrumental explanation for collective action. Klandermans (1984) showed that people are more likely to participate in protest when they believe this helps to redress their grievances at affordable costs. The more effective an individual believes collective action to be, the more likely s/he is to participate. The particularistic demonstrations demand instrumental or economic changes, which is not an easy task for the government, but changing the system, as demanded by the universalistic participants, is obviously much harder to achieve. For this reason, those who feel more efficacious will be participating in particularistic demonstrations. With

regard to participation history, Rüdig and Karyotis (2013) found that occasionals felt less efficacious, as did Saunders et al. (2012), so it is expected that those more efficacious will be regulars.

Identity is the third component. Studies consistently report that the more people identify with a group, the more they are inclined to protest on behalf of that group (Reicher, 1996; Sabucedo, Durán, & Alzate, 2010). Universalistic demonstrations, represented by Occupy/*Indignados* mobilisations, are a new movement, very diverse in its socio-demographic composition (Anduiza et al., 2014; Portos, 2016) and it consists of many small different organisations and independent people. In this sense, low identifiers will be those participating in universalistic protests. Additionally, being a regular implies by definition that people have more protest experience. Drury and Reicher (2009) suggest that protest participation in itself strengthens identification and induces collective empowerment (see also Klandermans, Sabucedo, Rodriguez, & de Weerd, 2002). The emergence of an inclusive self-categorisation as 'oppositional' leads to feelings of unity and expectations of support. This *empowers* people to oppose authorities. Moreover, it creates *collective self-objectification*, that is, it defines the participant's identity opposite the dominant out-group (Drury & Reicher, 2009). As such, taking it onto the streets strengthens empowerment and identification. Taken together, it is expected that those who are more identified will be participating as regulars in particularistic protests. .

Table 1 summarises the hypotheses for the main effects of the two factors under study (type of demonstration and participation history).

Our aim was not only to study the main effects, but also the interactions, with regard to the interactions between type of demonstrations and participation history, the hypotheses are the following:

- (1) Those who trust institutions more and who are more satisfied with democracy will be occasionals participating in particularistic demonstrations. Whereas having low levels of these two variables will make participants attend universalistic demonstrations (without differences among occasionals and regulars).
- (2) Those participants having a moderated political orientation will be attending particularistic protests as occasionals. Those more leftist will be regulars attending both types of protests.
- (3) Participants having high left economic values will participate as occasional in particularistic demonstrations.
- (4) The more embedded participants will be those regulars participating in particularistic demonstrations.
- (5) Those who score high on efficacy, anger and identity will be regulars, both in particularistic and universalistic demonstrations. Whereas those with the lowest scores in efficacy, anger and identity will be occasionals in particularistic demonstrations.
- (6) There will be fewer differences between occasionals and regulars in universalistic demonstrations than in particularistic demonstrations.

Table 1. Predictions: Differences between type of protest and mobilisation history.

	Type of protest		Participation history	
	Particularistic	Universalistic	Occasionals	Regulars
Trust in government	+	–	+	–
Satisfaction with democracy	+	–	+	–
Political orientation	–	+	+	–
Party identity closeness	+	–	–	+
Left economic values	+	–	+	–
Libertarian values	–	+	–	+
Organisational embeddedness	+	–	–	+
Anger	+	–	–	+
Efficacy	+	–	–	+
Identity	+	–	–	+

Notes: Participants' profiles are compared and type of mobilisation. A + indicates that a higher score is expected than in case of a –.

Table 2. Demonstrations.

Demonstration	Type	Main organisation	Demo date	SAMPLE			
				<i>n</i>	Male	Female	Mean age (SD)
Against labour law (Santiago)	Particularistic	Labour unions	30 June 2010	51	58.8%	41.2%	43 (12.26)
Against new labour law (Madrid)	Particularistic	Labour unions	29 September 2010	74	56.3%	43.7%	45 (10.65)
Against the crisis (Barcelona)	Particularistic	Labour unions	28 January 2010	38	67.5%	32.5%	40 (14.96)
<i>Indignados</i> (Madrid)	Universalistic	Democracia Real Ya	15 May 2011	122	55.8%	44.2%	41 (13.75)
Total				285	56.6%	43.4%	40 (14.49)

Methods

Participants

Our data derive from a collaborative European research project (Klandermans et al., 2009). This paper is based on four Spanish demonstrations that were covered between 2010 and 2011. Three particularistic demonstrations (called by labour unions against specific austerity measures taken by the Spanish Government or under the demand of the European Union), and one universalistic (called by Occupy/*Indignados* movement, not linked to political parties, social movement organisations or trade unions).

This apparent imbalance of the sample has an explanation: unions have conveyed several particularistic demonstrations in the period when we collected the data, in different regions of Spain trying to pressure government decisions. In the same period, only one universalistic demonstration was staged by the Occupy/*Indignados* movement. Given that samples must be a representative or accurate reflections of the universe under study (Sierra-Bravo, 1988), if there are different sectors in the population that are supposed to offer special characteristics for the purposes of the objectives of the research, the sample must also comprise this condition. Addressing this need, in this study, we have tracked three particularistic demonstrations in three different and representative regions of the country: Barcelona, Madrid and Santiago. Results show that the three of them are comparable and can be considered part of the same type of mobilisation given that all of them were called by the same organisations, with the same objectives and no differences were found among participants in the socio-structural variables education ($F_{(2,162)} = 7.90$; $p = .11$) and socio-economical level ($F_{(2,162)} = 4.17$; $p = .10$) nor in political orientation ($F_{(2,162)} = 9.58$; $p = .17$) or satisfaction with the system ($F_{(2,162)} = 3.04$; $p = .75$). In Table 2, the samples of the four demos are described.

Collecting data and sampling participants

Respondents completed questionnaires distributed *during* the demonstration ($n = 1000$)—to be returned to the university using prepaid envelopes. The response rate fluctuated between 25.7% and 35%. All questionnaires and procedures are standardised. For sampling demonstrators, the project designed a sampling strategy such that each participant had the same likelihood of being selected allowing us to have a representative sample of people demonstrating (Walgrave & Verhulst, 2011).

The procedure was as follows: several interviewers were at the demonstration approaching people selected according to the procedure established by Van Aelst and Walgrave (2001). Those who accepted to cooperate with the research were given a pre-stamped envelope which included the full questionnaire that participants should send by post.

One in five people also had to answer a short face-to-face interview, with the aim to control for non-response bias. This small interview included some of the variables of the long questionnaire, as for instance socio-demographics and some of the important dependent variables. After finishing this

short interview, this protester was asked to fill the full questionnaire at home, which was connected with the same code to the face-to-face interview.

As the response bias in the face-to-face interviews is extremely low (<10%), given proper sampling strategies, the comparison of the face-to-face interviews with the full questionnaires allows us to assess biases due to non-response. Comparing the responses from face-to-face interviews with questionnaires received by mail, we found no significant difference in socio-demographic (gender: $t = -1.12$; $p = .26$; age: $t = -.612$; $p = .541$) and political interest ($t = 1.55$; $p = .14$), and organisational membership ($t = -1.57$; $p = .12$). Therefore, we can conclude that the sample was representative of the people participating in the respective protests.²

Measures

Type of demonstration and participation history

Type of demonstration. We classified particularistic demonstrations as those called by trade unions, whose slogans and objectives were directly against government austerity measures and organised by the same labour unions, and all of them took place within the same year. The universalistic demonstration was the one held on 15 May 2011, organised by *Democracia Real Ya*, followed by a camp protest, (later) known as the Occupy/*Indignados* movement (for more information see Anduiza et al., 2014).

Participation history. We selected respondents by taking their frequency of participation in previous demonstrations into account. Respondents were asked: 'How many times have you taken part in a demonstration in the past?' They were asked to answer that over two time spans, namely *ever* and *in the past twelve months*: (never, 1 to 5, 6 to 10, 11 to 20 and more than 20 times). We classified those respondents who indicated that they participated 1–5 times in demonstrations ever and never or 1–5 times over the past 12 months as *Occasionals* ($n = 128$). Those who participated more than 21 times ever in demonstrations, and more than 6 times over the past 12 months were classified as *Regulars* ($n = 157$). This eventually resulted in a sample of 285 participants.

Criterion variables

The criterion variables are grouped into (1) attitudes towards the political system, (2) ideological positioning, (3) organisational embeddedness and (4) collective action frames. Nearly all questions were assessed with Likert scales ranging from 1 (not at all) to 5 (very much).

Attitudes towards political system. *Political trust:* Participants were given a list of institutions (National government, National parliament, Political parties, Judicial system and European Union) and were asked to indicate how much trust they had in each of them. ($\alpha = .83$)

Satisfaction with democracy: The participants were asked 'In general, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the functioning of democracy in your country?' (0 = not at all satisfied and 10 = very satisfied).

Ideological positioning. *Left/right self-placement:* The participants answered the question: 'In politics people sometimes talk of "left" and "right". Where would you place yourself on this scale, where 0 means left and 10 means right?'

Party identification: First, participants had to indicate which party they felt closest to. This was followed by the question, 'And how close would you say you are to [that] political party?' (1 = not very close, 2 = quite close and 3 = very close).

Political values: To assess political values, we relied on the scales developed by Heath, Evans, and Martin (1994). The economic left–right scale comprised the following measures: 'Government should redistribute income from the better off to those who are less well off' and 'Even the most important public services and industries are best left to private enterprise' (reversed coded). ($\alpha = .58$). The libertarian scale comprised the following measures: 'Children should be taught to obey authority'

(reversed coded), and ‘People from other countries should be allowed to come to my country and live here permanently if they want to.’ ($\alpha = .60$).

Organisational Embeddedness. *Organisational embeddedness:* We asked our respondents in how many organisations they have been actively involved in during the past 12 months. We created a scale by counting the number of memberships, ranging from 0 (none) to 12 (memberships).

Collective action frames. *Anger* was measured with the statement: ‘Thinking about the current economic crisis makes me feel angry’

Efficacy was measured using the following statements: ‘Organised groups of citizens can have a lot of impact on public policies in this country’ and ‘If citizens from different countries join forces, they can have a lot of impact on international politics.’ ($\alpha = .78$).

Collective identity was measured with the following questions: ‘To what extent do you identify with the other people present at the demonstration?’, ‘To what extent do you identify with any organisation staging the demonstration?’ ($\alpha = .60$).

Design

Given that we are using more than one factor variable, in this study, we propose a 2×2 factorial design: type of demonstration (Particularistic vs Universalistic) and participation history (occasionals vs. regulars). This factorial design is efficient, because instead of conducting a series of independent studies, we are effectively able to combine these factors into one study. Finally, factorial designs are the only effective way to examine interaction effects that might exist between our factors under study.

Taking into account this design (including two factors with categorical variables and several continuous criterion variables), it is appropriate to analyse them using a multiple analysis of variance (MANOVA) (Stevens, 2002; Warne, 2014).

Results

First, we present the distribution of occasionals and regulars across the two types of demonstrations. We continue with MANOVA results comparing the motivational dynamics of regulars and occasionals across the two types of demonstrations.

Occasionals and Regulars across Particularistic and Universalistic demonstrations

Particularistic and universalistic demonstrations attract different ratios of occasionals and regulars (see Table 3). Particularistic demonstrations organised by unions attracted more regulars (60.7%), and fewer occasionals (39.3%). Universalistic demonstrations, on the other hand, attracted more occasionals (52.4%) and fewer regulars (47.6%).

Do particularistic and universalistic regulars’ and occasionals’ motivational dynamics differ?

To examine this question, we conducted a MANOVA with type of protest (Particularistic vs. Universalistic) and demonstrator participation history (Occasionals vs. Regulars) as fixed factors, and attitudes towards political system, ideological positioning, organisational embeddedness and

Table 3. Distribution.

	Particularistic	Universalistic	Total
Occasionals	64 (39.3%)	64 (52.4%)	128 (44.9%)
Regulars	99 (60.7%)	58 (47.6%)	157 (55.1%)
Total	163	122	285

Table 4. MANOVA.

FACTOR	DVS	Factors levels		M	SD	F	Sig	η^2
Particularistic vs. Universalistic	Trust in institutions	Particularistic		2.19	.84	14.07 _(1, 278)	.001***	.05
		Universalistic		1.91	.57			
	Satisfaction with democracy	Particularistic		3.64	2.57	54.30 _(1, 278)	.001***	.16
		Universalistic		1.88	1.64			
Occasionals vs. regulars	Libertarian values	Particularistic		3.41	.91	7.12 _(1, 278)	.008**	.02
		Universalistic		3.57	.79			
	Organisational Embeddedness	Particularistic		2.59	2.64	9.54 _(1, 278)	.002**	.03
		Universalistic		1.59	2.20			
	Trust in institutions	Occasionals		2.21	.69	10.50 _(1, 278)	.001***	.04
		Regulars		1.95	.78			
	Satisfaction with democracy	Occasionals		3.28	2.29	11.78 _(1, 278)	.001***	.04
		Regulars		2.57	2.40			
	Left/right placement	Occasionals		2.97	1.74	125.02 _(1, 278)	.001***	.31
		Regulars		1.01	1.18			
	Party id. close	Occasionals		1.80	.52	16.20 _(1, 278)	.001***	.05
		Regulars		2.10	.65			
	Left economic values	Occasionals		4.05	.70	78.98 _(1, 278)	.001***	.22
		Regulars		4.66	.47			
	Libertarian values	Occasionals		3.10	.77	60.98 _(1, 278)	.001***	.18
		Regulars		3.80	.81			
Organisational Embeddedness	Occasionals		1.57	2.81	12.03 _(1, 278)	.001***	.04	
	Regulars		2.64	2.10				
Demonstration × participant profile	Identity	Occasionals		3.71	.74	20.89 _(1, 278)	.001***	.07
		Regulars		4.13	.68			
	Trust in institutions	Particularistic	Occasionals	2.46	.74	4.20 _(1, 278)	.04*	.02
			Regulars	2.01	.87			
		Universalistic	Occasionals	1.95	.54			
			Regulars	1.87	.60			
	Satisfaction with democracy	Particularistic	Occasionals	4.52	2.25	4.51 _(1, 278)	.03*	.02
			Regulars	3.07	2.59			
		Universalistic	Occasionals	2.05	1.53			
			Regulars	1.71	1.73			
	Identity	Particularistic	Occasionals	3.53	.82	12.82 _(1, 278)	.001***	.04
			Regulars	4.24	.69			
		Universalistic	Occasionals	3.91	.61			
			Regulars	3.95	.62			

* $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$; *** $p < .001$.

collective action frames as criterion variables. Results are shown in Table 4. Only the results of those variables showing significant differences between groups are displayed.

With regard to the type of demonstration, particularistic and universalistic protesters differ the most in their attitudes towards the political system. As expected, *less trust in institutions* ($F_{(1, 278)} = 13.74$; $p = .001$), more *disappointing with democracy*, ($F_{(1, 278)} = 52.11$; $p = .001$), holding stronger libertarian values ($F_{(1, 278)} = 6.66$; $p = .01$) and being less *embedded* ($F_{(1, 278)} = 8.72$; $p = .003$), makes protesters participate in universalistic demonstrations. However, contrary to our hypotheses, left/right self-placement, party identification and economic left–right values, as well as anger, efficacy and identity don't influence participation in universalistic or particularistic demonstrations.

Taking into account the participation history, regulars and occasionals differ from each other as well. Those who *identify* more with organisations and participants ($F_{(1, 278)} = 19.32$; $p = .001$), are more *distrustful* ($F_{(1, 278)} = 9.08$; $p = .003$), less *satisfied with democracy* ($F_{(1, 278)} = 10.01$; $p = .002$), more *leftist* ($F_{(1, 278)} = 116.31$; $p = .001$), more *identified with political parties* ($F_{(1, 278)} = 16.17$; $p = .001$) and more motivated by *libertarian* ($F_{(1, 278)} = 56.55$; $p = .001$) and *left economic values* ($F_{(1, 278)} = 79.21$; $p = .001$) as well as more *embedded* ($F_{(1, 278)} = 11.85$; $p = .001$), are regulars. Contrary to the expected, anger or efficacy makes no difference to be occasional or regular.

These results show that when we consider these two factors independently (participation history and type of demonstration), there are many differences between the groups. The most relevant variables

in this sense are those associated with the attitudes towards political system and ideological positioning. But, we also hypothesised interaction effects, that is, how the different motivations influence the participation of regulars and occasionals in particularistic and universalistic demonstrations? And indeed, we found that there are three variables that are significant when we analyse these two factors in interaction. Two are related to the attitudes towards political system, *trust in institutions* ($F_{(1, 278)} = 4.20; p = .04$) and *satisfaction with democracy* ($F_{(1, 278)} = 4.51; p = .03$), and one of the collective action frames: *identity* ($F_{(1, 278)} = 12.82; p = .001$). Figures 1–3 display these interaction effects.

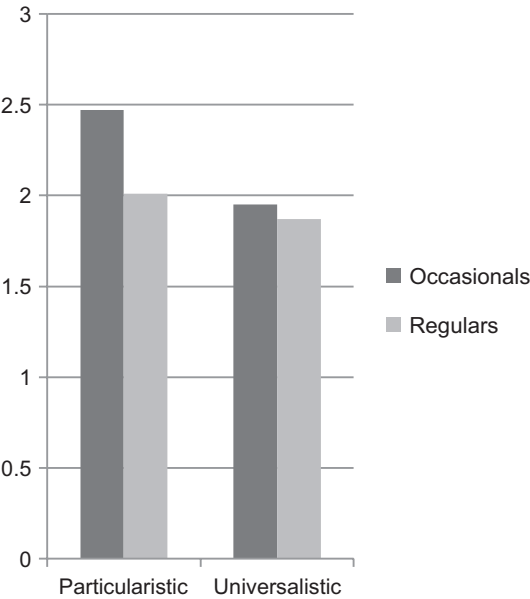


Figure 1. Trust in institutions.

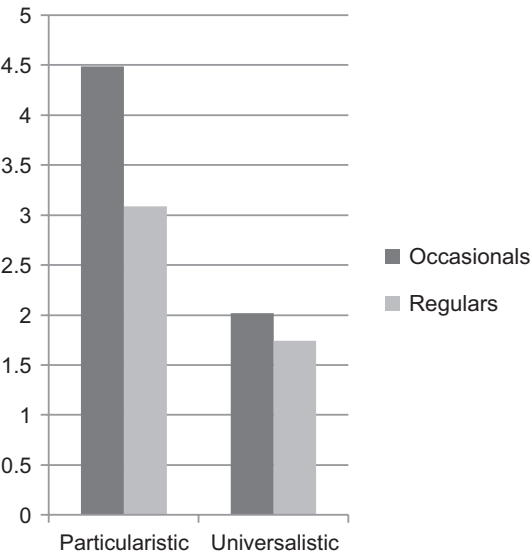


Figure 2. Satisfaction with democracy.

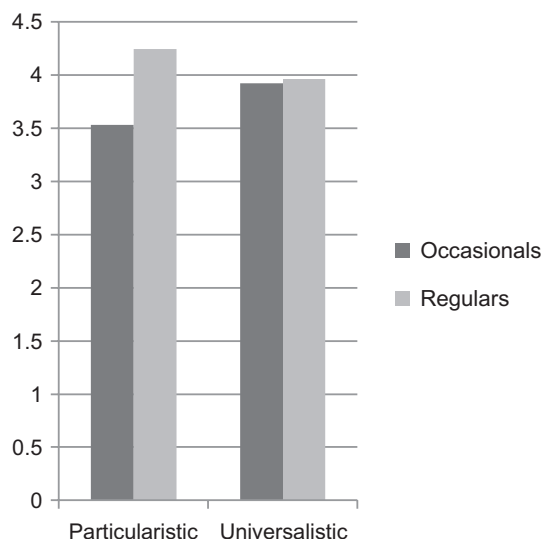


Figure 3. Collective identity.

Those who trust the system most of all participate as occasionals in particularistic protests. However, being distrustful of political institutions leads to participation in universalistic protests, as occasional or as a regular.

Being poorly satisfied with democracy makes people participate as occasional or regular in universalistic participants. However, protesters more satisfied will participate as occasionals in particularistic demonstrations. Note that satisfaction with democracy is asked on an 11-point scale, hence, all groups are well below the midpoint of the scale. The levels of distrust and dissatisfaction with democracy clearly reveal that the respondents experience a political crisis.

Being strongly identified leads participants to be regulars in particularistic demonstrations, whereas those who identified less will be occasionals in particularistic demonstrations.

Apart from these significant differences, similar levels in key variables for protest participation were found, especially in anger and efficacy. The scores were very high, always above 4, on a scale of 5 points. This shows that these variables are important in the context of political protest.

Discussion and conclusion

The objective of this study was to find out if being occasional or regular, as well as participating in a particularistic or universalistic demonstration, was differentially motivated. A 2×2 analysis, revealed significant differences among groups, but also helped to confirm significant similarities among them. Without a doubt, the more relevant ones are in those characteristics which traditionally encourage participation in collective action: the anger caused by the perception of group grievances and the belief that protest is useful to change those situations (Klandermans, 1984; Van Zomeren et al., 2008).

As for the differences, first, what happens to motives to participate in one or the other demonstration will be discussed. More negative attitudes towards the political system, more libertarian values and being weakly embedded in classic social organisations makes protesters participate in universalistic demonstrations. Namely, self-identified left wingers disenchanted with politics and its actors (political parties and unions) of the traditional left-wing European parties. Just like those actors, they are clearly on the left, but at the same time they don't feel represented by them. This is the main reason that pushes them to participate in a demonstration which fights against economic cuts, but also in favour of a more profound change in the system, not led by left-wing political parties or unions. Having high levels of

anger and efficacy, but looking for more radical changes in the political and economic system, makes participants protest in universalistic demonstrations.

This proves that, contrary to what is defended by some studies (Della Porta & Mattoni, 2014; Flesher-Fominaya & Cox, 2013), not all the demonstrations carried out in this period of hardship can be understood as exactly the same, given that participants differ in their reasons to participate in one or the other. Material grievances are perhaps the starting point for mobilisation against austerity measures (Hayes, 2017), but these are socially constructed and apparently, in this construction, the perceptions of the political system and organisational embeddedness are critical to move participants into one type of demonstration or the other.

Another factor analysed was participation history. The aim was to ascertain to what extent motivations are different to participate as occasional or as a regular. The political and economic crisis brought, in addition to the regular protesters, occasionals onto the streets. Despite taking part in the same demonstration, their motivational dynamics are different. On the four motivational variables analysed (attitudes towards political system, ideological positioning, organisational embeddedness and collective action frames) there are significant differences, and the results go in the same direction: those who trust less and are less satisfied with the system, who have a more extreme ideological positioning, more embedded and who identify stronger with the movement are regulars. This indicates a more politicised identity (Simon & Klandermans, 2001). For this reason, their presence in collective action would be motivated by solidarity strategies, while occasionals would do it more for opportunistic/individualistic reasons (Ellemers et al., 1999).

The differences among occasionals and regulars could be the effect of a socialisation process in which, among others, successes of collective actions, the ability to set the political agenda of the country, sharing fate, raising consciousness and so on, reinforce occasionals' identification with the movement. Having helped to visualise a new political alternative strengthens self-concepts of those who participated (Tajfel & Turner, 1979) and their psychological well-being. These are distinguishing elements, which determine if occasionals become regulars, or remain occasional (Klar & Kasser, 2009). In this sense, longitudinal studies would be interesting to see if the occasionals that become regulars strengthen their reasons to participate.

A final set of factors recognises that political protest is a multi-causal phenomenon. Taking this into account, in this work it is examined how the different motivations influence the participation of regulars and occasionals in particularistic and universalistic demonstrations. According to this, the decision to participate in a demonstration is defined by a set of interactions.

Firstly, those who trust institutions more, who are more satisfied with the system and less identified with organisers and other participants, will be particularistic occasionals. Being less critical, they seem to be motivated by what Ellemers et al. (1999) called opportunistic/individualistic strategy.

Secondly, maintaining more critical attitudes towards the system and being more identified with the organisers and other participants makes demonstrators protest as regulars in particularistic demonstrations. These participants seem to fit the profile of a militant or sympathiser that questioned the economic cuts.

Lastly, there are similar motivations in both regular and occasional universalistic participants. Their attitudes towards the system are similar and are the most critical of all groups. In the case of the occasionals, despite having lesser experience of protest, and therefore of political socialisation as wide as regular, share with these the same degree of disaffection with the system. Perhaps these would be those who would have stayed at home if the economic and political situation had not been broken down and if there wouldn't have been a supply of remobilisation, not linked to the 'old' left political actors.

Apart from these results, certain limitations need to be recognised in our study. First, participants in only one country (Spain) are compared, future research is needed to test whether the same differences between participants are found in other countries. And second, it would be interesting to analyse more than only one universalistic demonstration to avoid the unbalance of the sample.

Despite these limitations, this study has two fundamental aspects that need to be stressed. First, it shows that not all the anti-austerity demonstrations attract the same type of participants; they differ in

their motives for participation, depending on their attitudes towards political system, their ideological positioning and their organisational embeddedness. And second, that even at the same demonstration participants differ in their motives for participation depending on their past participation history.

However, some questions remain unanswered and future investigation requires the opportunity to discuss them, as for instance: What is the mediating role of organisational embeddedness and attitudes towards political system in the subsequent choice between mobilisations? Here, it seems to play a role given that particularistic participants are highly likely to be mistrustful of institutions where they are embedded, but less mistrustful where they are not, while universalistic participants are likely to be highly mistrustful, irrespective of embeddedness. We believe that further investigation of the relationship between these types of variable and protest participation, across multiple settings, will provide a fruitful agenda for future research.

Notes

1. Heath et al. (1994) refer to this scale as Socialist/laissez faire, we deem this confusing and changed it to the more commonly used economic left–right dimension (e.g. Hooghe, Marks, & Wilson, 2002).
2. See van Stekelenburg, Walgrave, Klandermans, and Verhulst (2012), for an extensive discussion of the various biases resulting from sampling and non-response.

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